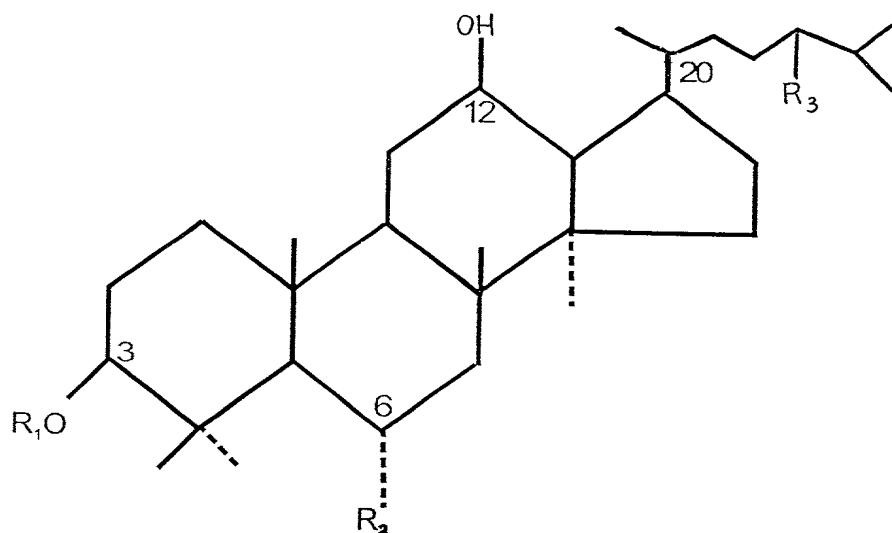


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A sapogenin according to the formula:



wherein R1 is H, glc or glc¹⁻² glc, R2 is H or OH, R3 is H or OH; and when R1, R2 and R3 are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R1 is H, R2 is OH and R3 is OH, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R1 is H, R2 is OH and R3 is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 24(25); and when R1 is glc, R2 is H and R3 is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R1 is glc¹⁻² glc, R2 is H and R3 is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 24(25); and pharmaceutically acceptable compositions incorporating said sapogenins.

2. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R1, R2 and R3 are H, and there are double bonds at 20(21) and 24(25).

3. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R1 is H, R2 and R3 are OH, and there are double bonds at 20(22) and 25(26).

4. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R1 is H, R2 is OH and R3 is H, and there are double bonds at 20(22) and 24(25).

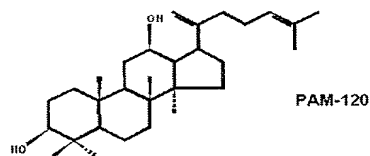
5. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R1 is glc, R2 and R3 are H, and there are double bonds at 20(21) and 24(25).

6. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R1 is $\text{glc}^{1-2}\text{glc}$, R2 and R3 are H, and there are double bonds at 20(22) and 24(25).

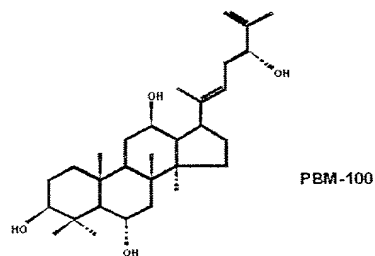
7. The use of a sapogenin according to the formula recited in claim 1 in treating cancer cells in a human being suffering from cancer, comprising killing cancer cells, inducing apoptosis in cancer cells, or inhibiting multiplication of cancer cells, or any combination thereof.

8. The use of a sapogenin according to the formula recited in claim 1 in treating multi-drug resistant cancer cells (MDR) in a human being suffering from cancer, comprising using the sapogenins either singly, or in combination with one another, or in combination with other chemotherapy agents.

9. A sapogenin according to the formula:

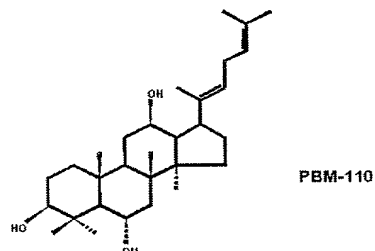


10. A sapogenin according to the formula:

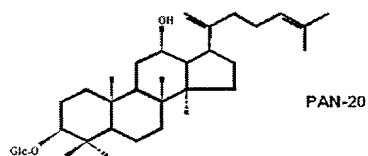


11. A sapogenin according to the formula:

5



12. A sapogenin according to the formula:



- 10 13. A sapogenin according to the formula:

